

## Economy and Employment

Another important factor to be considered in estimating the future traffic growth of an area is its economic base. The number of employers and the average per capita income, or purchasing power, influences how much population can be supported in an area and the number of motor vehicles that will be locally owned and operated. Generally, as family income increases so does the number of vehicles owned, as well as the number of vehicles trips generated per day by each household. An accurate projection of the future economy of an area is essential in estimating future travel demand.

Factors that will influence economic growth and development in Stanly County over the thirty year planning period include the expansion of the urban areas along the Cabarrus and Union County line. Another influence on the future economic growth of Stanly County is potential industrial development along US 52 and NC 24/17. Increased amounts of tourism and development in prime waterfront location may also result in secondary growth for Stanly County.

## Land Use

Land use refers to the physical patterns of activities and functions within a municipality or county. Traffic problems in a given area often can be attributed to adjacent land use. For example, a large industrial plant may cause congestion during shift change hours on a road that otherwise has little, if any, congestion. The spatial distribution of different types of land uses is a predominant determinant of when, where, and to what extent traffic congestion occurs. The travel demand between different land uses and the resulting impact on traffic conditions varies depending on the size, type, intensity, and spatial separation of development.

For use in transportation planning, land uses are grouped into the categories defined below.

- **Residential** - land devoted to the housing of people (excludes hotels and motels)
- **Commercial** - land devoted to retail trade, including consumer and business services and offices
- **Industrial** - land devoted to manufacturing, storage, warehousing, and transportation of products
- **Public** - land devoted to social, religious, educational, cultural, and political activities

Figure 7 shows the area's existing land use map, which was provided by Stanly County.

Anticipated future land use is a logical extension of the present spatial distribution. Determination of where and what type of growth is expected to occur within the planning area facilitates developing proposed thoroughfares or the improvement of existing thoroughfares. Areas of anticipated development and growth for Stanly County are listed below.

- Residential - Furr, East Center, and West Center Townships
- Commercial/Retail - North Albemarle Township
- Industrial - Harris Township